

Truth and Love United:

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED BEFORE

THE CORRESPONDENT BOARD IN LONDON

Of the Honourable

SOCIETY IN SCOTLAND

(Incorporated by Royal Charter)

FOR

PROPAGATING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

In the Highlands and Islands,

AND FOR

SPREADING THE GOSPEL

Among the Indians in America.

At Salters' Hall, on Wednesday, April 6th, 1774,

By WILLIAM LANGFORD, D.D.

Published at the Request of the Society and their
Correspondent Board in London.



LONDON, 6th April, 1774.

At a Board of the Correspondent Members in London of the Society in Scotland (incorporated by royal charter) for Propagating Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands, and for Spreading the Gospel among the Indians in America,

Resolved,

That the Thanks of this Board be given to the Rev. Dr. LANGFORD for his excellent Sermon preached this day before the Board, and that he be desired to permit the same to be printed for the Use of the Society.

J. MACKINTOSH, Secretary.

N. B. This and the annual Sermons preached before the Society, at Edinburgh, may be had *gratis* from the Secretary, N^o. 23, Lothbury.

TO

The Right Honourable

THOMAS Earl of KINNOUL,

PRESIDENT of the GENERAL COURT,

The Right Honourable

DAVID Earl of LEVEN and MELVILL,

PRESES of the Committee of DIRECTORS,

AND THE OTHER

Right Honourable, Honourable, Reverend, and Worthy
Directors and Members of the SOCIETY in SCOTLAND
for PROPAGATING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE in the
HIGHLANDS and ISLANDS, and for SPREADING
THE GOSPEL among the INDIANS in
AMERICA,

AND TO

THE CORRESPONDENT BOARD OF THE
SOCIETY IN LONDON,

T H I S S E R M O N

(Published at their Request)

IS MOST HUMBLY AND RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

THOMAS B. B. of Minnesota

RESIDENT of GENERAL COURT

The Honorable

of the State of Minnesota

and DIRECTOR



1851

Received of the Honorable

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one hundred and

thirty pounds

for the purchase of

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The 3d Verse of the General Epistle of Jude.

Beloved, when I gave all Diligence to write unto you of the common Salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints.

IT is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing. Of all the good things that we mortals can know, the Christian Religion is the best; and our zeal for the propagation thereof, if regulated by the precepts of Christ, cannot fail of being acceptable to God, and profitable to ourselves and our fellow creatures.

This City has long been honourably distinguished by good works of various kinds, relative to the temporal and spiritual welfare of the poor: I come this day to publish and recommend to your regard a most excellent and extensive charity, planned and executed by a very honourable Society in Scotland, incorporated by royal charter, for propagating Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands, (*those remote parts* of our now happily united country of Great Britain, *that are*

most ignorant and exposed to the artifices of Popery) and for the Civilization and Conversion of the American Indians.

Every man who believes that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament contain a divine revelation, and shew us the way to eternal life, must certainly wish well to this design, and be disposed to encourage it as far as he is able without injury to any other schemes of benevolence in which he may be engaged; for the institution which I am to lay before you is no party business, but calculated wholly for the advancement of pure and undefiled Christianity, and the happiness of civil society: it is therefore worthy of the notice and assistance of all the disciples of Christ of every denomination among Protestants, and of all the friends of the free and good government under which we live.

These considerations give me a sensible pleasure in entering upon the great and important matter of my discourse, and raise in my heart an agreeable expectation of some success through the blessing of the Father of lights and the God of love.

The text which I have made choice of on this occasion may perhaps be thought not altogether suitable to my declared intention, because it seems to carry in it the alarm of war; but, upon due examination, I am persuaded it will be found consonant to the Gospel of peace and liberty, and a dictate of that divine spirit of goodness that is the glory of our religion.

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The writer of the Epistle, of which my subject is a branch, was Jude or Judas, who calls himself the servant of Jesus Christ (the highest of all human titles) and the brother of James; by which name he is opposed to Judas the traitor, who sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver: it is extremely probable he was the same person whom the Evangelist Luke numbers among the twelve Apostles *. This Epistle of Judas was not directed to any particular person or church, but to the general body of Christians through the whole world; to all them that were sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called into his fellowship and the participation of the blessings of his everlasting kingdom and glory.

It is almost the same with the 2d chapter of the 2d Epistle of Peter, and generally supposed to have been written about the same time; not long before the destruction of Jerusalem, at which period there were (according to our Saviour's prophecy †) many false Christs, and false prophets and teachers, who deceived many of the Jews, and likewise great numbers of professed Christians, by perverting the Gospel, and drawing men from the original doctrine of Christ to new notions and modes of religion, which they invented in order to gratify their own pride and avarice, and to stop the progress of truth, and the growing honour of Christ's chosen witnesses. So early did the enemy

* Luke vi. 16.

† Matth. xxiv. 24.

begin to sow his tares in the field of the Christian church, and to introduce evil doctrines and manners, by which the holy name of our Lord was brought into contempt! Judas was fired with just indignation against these wicked innovators and seducers of God's people, and having before resolved (by the direction of the Holy Ghost) to write a general Epistle to Christians on the common salvation, (the great article of the Gospel, or the way in which it pleased God to save sinners, both Jews and Gentiles) he saw it was necessary to write this short letter immediately without delay, as an antidote against the poison of those false and bad principles which these men were endeavouring to spread abroad with all possible art and industry; and he began his address with an exhortation to Christians, that they should contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.

If we would enter into the true sense and spirit of this apostolick exhortation, we must consider the persons whom he called to this contest, the object of it, the enemies against whom it was to be maintained, the way and manner in which the contest was to be pursued, and the grounds and reasons of the duty required.

I. The exhortation was given to all sincere Christians; for to them was the Epistle sent, and they were parties concerned in the contest for the faith to which the Apostle exhorted them. It was *their own* faith, that faith which they had obtained,
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and in the benefits whereof they were interested in common with the Apostles : and it was a property of inestimable worth, far more precious than all the riches, honours, and pleasures of this world : it was the gift of God, and connected with eternal life.

Some may think that Ministers are the only persons who are called to contend for the Christian Faith, but they are in a great error ; for Christ allows not to any that name his Name a neutrality in his cause : we must be for him or against him, be his friends or his adversaries *. This is a truth that deserves our most serious attention, and should never be forgotten. If we are Christians a necessity is laid upon us, and woe to us if we have no zeal for the Gospel of our Redeemer. It is not expected from them that make no profession of the faith, but of us it is absolutely required, and our obligation is indispensable. To any who acknowledge the authority of our Divine Lord, there is no discharge from this warfare.

Indifferency with regard to the Christian Religion in them who profess it, is one of the greatest of sins, a crime and folly beyond expression ; for if this Religion be true (as we say it is) it must be a truth of the greatest importance to all of us, because it is the only way in which we can escape the wrath of God, and obtain everlasting happiness.

If we fight not the good fight of faith, instead of being good soldiers of Christ we are base and

* Matth. xii. 30.

shameful deserters in his eyes ; if we live to ourselves and not to him, and mind our own things more than his, we are not his servants but hypocrites, and are acting against him under a vain and deceitful appearance of loyalty and subjection.

Lukewarmness is practical infidelity ; he that will not confess Christ before men with a becoming fortitude and zeal, denies him before men, and shews himself afraid or ashamed of his Gospel.

A real Christian is a man of a public spirit, and determined by grace to seek the welfare of all the Israel of God, the welfare of the whole sacred community to which he belongs, as a living and sympathising member ; his chief desire is that the Lord's way may be known in the earth and his saving health in all nations, that the people, yea, all the people may praise him, that his name may be hallowed, his kingdom come, and his will be done here below as it is in heaven.

The glory of God is the last end of man's creation and redemption ; from this he fell by sin, and to this he is restored by the atoning blood of Christ, and a new-creating work of his spirit.

Every one who is born of God has a certain greatness of soul infused into him ; he is in some good measure raised above self and creatures, and devoted to his Maker and Saviour, in whose cause he wishes to unite the boldness of the lion with the gentleness of the lamb, and the wisdom of the serpent with the innocency of the dove.

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We see now the persons to whom the exhortation to contend for the faith is addressed; and I hope we see that none of us are excused from bearing a part in this glorious strife. And if it is an affair of universal concern to believers, it becomes us to lay aside all little prejudices, that have a tendency to divide our hearts and to weaken our hands in this work of the Lord, and to beg of him to give us clear understanding of our duty in the case proposed, and hearts to do what he hath commanded us. And I must beg leave to say we need his grace to keep us in these services, that we may not be slothful, but fervent in spirit, and may walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.

II. I proceed therefore to the object of the contest to which the Apostle exhorted the Christians of his day, and by consequence us, on whom the ends of the world are come. It was the faith which was once delivered to the saints.

This faith was the Gospel, the word of salvation, preached by the ancient Prophets, by the Son of God himself, and by his Apostles and Evangelists, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven to confirm it by miracles. What these inspired men of God delivered in their discourses was committed to writing for the more sure preservation of the truth, and put into the hands of God's people as a precious trust and depomite, not only for their use, but for the advantage of remotest posterity. And it was once delivered to them; not all at once, but in that one age, emphatically called the

age of the Messiah, in which God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake to the fathers by the Prophets, hath spoken to us by his own Son and Heir. It was also spoken once for all, as the final revelation of God to mankind, and as the one standing rule of Christian worship, faith and practice in every age, to which nothing must be added as necessary to salvation, and from which nothing must be taken away, unless the change of times and circumstances renders some particular customs of the primitive Christians inexpedient, such, I mean, as the love-kiss and the feasts of charity.

The principal articles of the Christian faith are, no doubt, reducible to the general heads contained in that ancient creed that passes to this day under the name of the Apostles; viz. the holy and ever-blessed Trinity; the salvation of the sinners of mankind by the undertaking and performances of the Son of God in our nature and stead; his incarnation, obedience and sufferings; his resurrection, ascension, and exaltation at the right hand of God; his coming again to judge the world in righteousness; the mission of the Holy Ghost; the unity and fellowship of all true believers; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. These are without doubt the comprehensive principles of the Christian Religion; and it is very probable that before the writings of the New Testament were finished and collected, the Apostles gave to the churches
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some little abridgment of the Gospel which they had preached for their direction. Perhaps this was what the Apostle meant by the *form of doctrine* delivered to the Romans *, and the *form of sound words* mentioned in his Epistle to Timothy †, and in another place, the *principles of the doctrine of Christ* ‡. But it is by no means credible that the Apostles composed that creed which is commonly attributed to them, for it is not once spoken of in the history of their Acts; nor did any of the first apologists for the Christian Religion appeal to it as the standard of the faith: and though they gave short summaries of the Christian doctrine, they made use of terms different from one another and from this creed.—Besides, (as a learned prelate of the Church of England has observed) if this creed had been known and generally received as of apostolick authority, it is reasonable to think Arius would have laid the weight of his cause upon it; for it contains no express declaration of the divinity of the Son, nor of the Holy Ghost: but as it doth not appear that he ever advanced this argument, his silence is a presumptive proof that this creed was either unknown in his time, or not believed to have been the work of the inspired writers.—And as to later creeds, (whether before or since the Reformation) they must be received or rejected as they are found upon serious and impartial examination to be agreeable or contrary to the

* Rom. vi. 17.
Burnet. Exp. Art. 8.

† 2 Tim. i. 13.

‡ Heb. vi. 1.

word of God.—All Protestants profess unanimously, that the holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; and that what is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man to be received as an article of faith, nor be thought requisite and necessary to salvation.

Oral traditions (both Jewish and Popish) we are not to regard. To the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament we must go, as to the lively oracles of God, and the only certain and infallible rule of faith, worship, and practice, in matters pertaining to conscience and another world.

Preaching and expounding the Scriptures are appointed by God as means of the propagation of the Gospel; catechisms and creeds founded on the Scriptures deserve great respect, and may be very useful for the instruction of youth, and the edification of the church of Christ; but we must remember that he alone is our Master, King, and Judge, before whom we must all appear and give an account of ourselves; and that his word only has an authority over our consciences, which cannot be bound by civil laws, nor by ecclesiastical, in things relating to our acceptance with God and our eternal salvation; for (as Christians) we are not the servants of men, but of Christ: and I know not that he has given authority to magistrates, ministers, or the church, to make laws, with penalties annexed to them, to oblige his subjects to subscribe to their interpretations of Scripture, and submit

submit to their invented rites and ceremonies ; nor do I see the consistence of such requisitions with Christ's supreme and sole headship, the perfection of the Scriptures, and the liberty with which our Lord has made us free. But I shall drop this controversy, which has been carried on by much abler hands, to whose writings I refer my hearers, and proceed,

III. To take some notice of the enemies against whom the Apostle exhorted Christians to contend for their faith. They were false teachers, and most abominable sinners. For (says he) there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

These deceivers got into the society of Christians by a serpentine guile and art, before their bad principles and manners were known; they were described in ancient prophecies, and according to God's eternal purpose were, as a just punishment for their sins, given up to their own lusts, and to strong delusions, to believe and propagate lies, that they (if they repented not) might be damned, because they did not believe the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness *. They were ungodly men, strangers and enemies to God and religion; they turned the grace of our God into lasciviousness, by misrepresenting the doctrine of grace, as if it gave encouragement to sin, and a licence to commit all manner of iniquity; and they denied the only Lord God and

* 2 Theff. ii. 11, 12.

our Lord Jesus Christ. St. Peter says, they brought in damnable heresies, even denying the LORD *that bought them* *. As this character is manifestly applicable to Jesus Christ, it is the opinion of the learned Beza, and some other expositors, that Jude speaks here of him under the several titles of the only Lord God and our Lord; the *only* Lord God, not in exclusion of the Father and the Holy Ghost, but of all creatures in heaven and upon earth; and *our* Lord, by reason of our professed subjection to him as the sole head of the church. These false teachers denied the divinity of Christ's person, and trod under foot his holy commandments.

Their lives were as bad as their principles; and from the account which the Apostle gives us of their vices we may observe, that there is a connection between, speculative and practical errors, which may be proved by many plain Scriptures. The light of the body is the eye (says our Lord); if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness: if therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! The single eye is the clear knowledge and lively faith of the truth, which sanctifies the will, affections, and practice; and the evil eye is an unbelieving and prejudiced mind, which corrupteth the heart and life.—And how dangerous is the state of that soul whose understanding, which should be his guide, is his seducer?

* 2 Peter ii. 1.

For this reason Christ charged his disciples to take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees *, and compared false teachers to thieves and robbers †: and his Apostles in the most solemn manner warned Christians against giving countenance to deceivers, whose words did eat like a canker; and exhorted them to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering. These admonitions shew us the pernicious effects of error, and should lead us to pray that God would give us understanding that we may keep his law, and observe it with our whole hearts. Truth is the root of holiness, and error the source of all manner of moral evil.

IV. But it is time for us now to come to our next enquiry, with respect to the way in which we should contend for the faith.

This contest should be earnest and zealous, but spiritual and not carnal. The church of Christ was in a state of persecution in the times of the Apostles, the rulers of the earth were combined against the Disciples of Jesus; they were not tolerated, much less established and supported by civil authority and human laws: they had therefore no power to compel men to profess their religion, and if they had been possessed of worldly power, they must not have made use of violent and coercive measures to propagate the Gospel, because these are contrary to the spiritual nature of our religion,

* Matth. vi. 22, 23.

† Matth. xvi. 6. John x. 8.

which requires a free, liberal, and rational service, founded on the conviction of the judgment and consent of the will. Christ's kingdom is not of this world, nor is it to be defended by the might and power of man, but only by the power of the spirit of the Lord and his word.

How then are we to contend for the faith? The Apostle teacheth us this in the 20th, 21st, 22d, and 23d verses of this epistle, and it may be useful to attend carefully to each of the particular directions which he offered to the saints in those perilous times that were come upon them, and which can never be out of season in this world.

The first exhortation to Christians was to build up themselves on their most holy faith.—The Christian church is God's spiritual house; Christ is the foundation of this house, the Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, and other Ministers, were builders whom he employed in his work, and all faithful preachers of the Gospel to this day are, in their lower rank, labourers together with him; but the whole building rests upon his divine person, merits and grace.

Believers are interested in Christ's benefits, Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification; and it is their indispensable duty, by his grace, to edify themselves and one another in Christian knowledge and practice.—Let every man examine himself whether he be in the faith, search the Scriptures, and go on to perfection. Let ministers be apt
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to teach, preach the word in season and out of season, declare the whole counsel of God, and watch for souls as those that must give an account.—Let parents train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, that they may serve him to the end of their lives.—Let heads of families be diligent in their endeavours to preserve the power and beauty of religion in their houses, and labour to suppress vice and encourage piety and virtue by their example and authority.—Let members of churches instruct, reprove, exhort, help, and comfort one another. If we thus build up ourselves on our most holy faith, we shall be kept from the errors of the wicked, and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

The next exhortation is to prayer in the Holy Ghost.—This is well connected with the foregoing advice, for we cannot build up ourselves on our most holy faith, if we do not pray for divine wisdom and assistance; it is too great a work for us to perform in our own strength: Grace laid the foundation of the building, and grace will lay the top-stone thereof. We come to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need; and it is the office of the Holy Ghost to help our infirmities in prayer, to enlighten our understanding, and teach us what we should pray for as we ought, with reverence and godly fear, with humble submission to the divine will, with unfeigned sorrow
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for sin, and faith in the atoning blood and all-perfect righteousness of Christ for acceptance, with filial love, liberty, confidence, and joy.

Such prayers are well pleasing to God and profitable to men, for the Lord will hear and answer them; he knows the mind of the spirit even when he intercedes for them with groanings that cannot be uttered, for he always makes intercession according to the will of God. Spiritual prayer availeth much; it unlocks the treasures of the covenant of grace, and brings out of Christ's fulness all the blessings which he hath purchased for his people.

Prayer is the weapon by which the church of Christ contends with and shall conquer all her enemies, visible and invisible, and in perilous days it is the great means of her preservation, enlargement, and establishment.—Violence and persecution are the instruments which the Devil makes use of to support his kingdom of darkness, idolatry, and cruelty; truth needs not these defences, nor will she accept of them.—Let superstition, ignorance, and error, apply to an arm of flesh for protection, but let not the servants of the meek and merciful Jesus strive to maintain his religion by penal laws, worldly terrors and rewards, but let them cry to the Lord for a more general and abundant effusion of the spirit of truth, holiness, and charity; let them pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and the prosperity of Zion, and the revival of God's work in the midst of the years.

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In the way of humble supplication we may hope that the Lord of the harvest will send forth labourers into his harvest, and give success to their service, and make his word to run and be glorified.

Another exhortation which the Apostle gives to Christians, is to keep themselves in the love of God.

By the love of God in this place, I think we may understand love *to* God, which is the fruit of his love to us. God directs men's hearts into the love of his name, by manifesting his good will to them in Christ Jesus, and by the free forgiveness of their sins for his sake: and he keeps them in a filial affection to himself, by continued acts of favour and kindness to them. But it is their duty to *keep themselves* in the love of God, by the diligent use of the appointed means of perseverance in the life of godliness, by meditation on his glorious attributes and works, by a due respect to his word and ordinances, by fervent charity to all good men, who are his children, and by keeping his commandments, which to them that love him are not grievous.

It is no easy matter, even with the aids of grace, to keep our hearts in the love of God; for they are bent to backsliding from him, and the objects of sense, through our natural corruption, have a tendency to alienate our minds from that great Being whom we have not seen.—So when iniquity abounds, the love of many will wax cold: and if Christians leave their first love, they will leave

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their first works; for love is the fulfilling of the whole law with reference to God and man; and in the good fight of faith this is the leading grace: for which reason we are commanded to speak the truth in love *, and to stand fast in one spirit with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel †. The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy ‡. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God; true zeal is the ardour of divine and social love, and absolutely inconsistent with malevolence, hatred, and injustice to our fellow-creatures.—We must therefore keep ourselves in the love of God, that we may be lawful contenders for the faith, which is a doctrine according to godliness, and so essentially constituted for the promotion of piety, that a wicked man cannot but be an enemy to it in his heart; nor can any one be a real Christian but he who loves God.

The last direction given by the Apostle, in order to our contending for the faith, is much to be regarded; and that is, that we look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

The desire of immortality is natural to us, and immortal glory is the highest point to which our wishes and hopes can be raised. The Gospel has brought life and immortality to light; Christ came from heaven to redeem his

* Eph. iv. 15.

† Phil. i. 27.

‡ James iii. 17.

people from eternal death, and to procure for them, by his merits, eternal life, which they cannot claim as a debt due to their works, but they must receive it as a gift of mercy to the guilty and miserable; and it is the gift of Christ's mercy, not only because he and his father are one, but likewise because it is the purchase of his blood, and the blessing which he bestows as the supreme ruler and judge. The Christian life is a continual looking for this mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ by faith, desire, hope, holy fear, and active preparation for his appearance.—The hope of the hypocrite shall be cut off like a spider's web, but the Christian's hope, founded on God's mercy and Christ's righteousness, is full of immortality, and shall not make him ashamed.

This lively hope is the helmet that covers the head of the Christian warrior in the day of battle, and the chief incentive of his zeal for the purity of Christian faith and practice, in contending for which he must resist the Devil, the world, and the flesh, bear the displeasure and contempt of many, exercise much patience towards them that oppose the truth, and labour to deny himself and mortify his own evil lusts, which are enmity itself against the holy doctrines and precepts of the Gospel.—In such a warfare as this, who would not faint if he had not the hope of a future reward? Who would not desire to be exempted from the peril and toil of the conflict, were it not for the

expectation of rest and recompence in the world to come?

It is an arduous work to contend for the faith as we ought, it is not striving for earthly honours, pleasures and emoluments, but for the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and the cause of truth, liberty, righteousness, and brotherly love and peace.—In this combat much is to be done and endured, no expence nor pains must be spared, according to our abilities, to gain our end: and what but the prospect of eternal life is sufficient to support the contending believer under all his difficulties and discouragements? Did he look for nothing better from the hands of his Master than the goods of this life, he would be disposed to follow the faith and manners of the times and places in which he lived, without strict examination of the reasons of the popular belief and practice; gain would be his godliness, and secular preferment the very soul of his religion; but he follows a self-denying and crucified Jesus, that having overcome the world, he may live and reign with him for ever.

Thus have we seen by what means Christians should strive to establish and spread the faith and fruits of the Gospel, and to prevent the entrance of error and sin into the church.—The Apostle adds a few rules respecting their conduct towards them who had been seduced—Of some have compassion (says he, ver. 22, 23.), making a difference. And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. ‘ Some
‘ (would

‘ (would he say) fall through ignorance and infirmity,
 ‘ or the power of a sudden temptation; be gentle
 ‘ and tender-hearted in your treatment of them,
 ‘ making a proper distinction between these erring
 ‘ brethren and those proud and carnal authors of
 ‘ strife and division, who aim at nothing but their
 ‘ own praise and temporal interest: restore a weak
 ‘ fallen brother in the spirit of meekness, con-
 ‘ sidering how liable you are yourselves to mistakes
 ‘ and offences. Others are wilful and obstinate
 ‘ transgressors, them you must endeavour to save
 ‘ by fear, sharp rebukes, and awful warnings,
 ‘ pulling them like brands out of the fire, in which
 ‘ they are in great danger of being consumed; and
 ‘ if you should be obliged to separate them from
 ‘ your communion, let it be done without hatred
 ‘ of their persons, or injury to their worldly affairs,
 ‘ from a pure principle of aversion to evil. Let
 ‘ your hatred be only against sin, and all appear-
 ‘ ances of it; for, as under the law men were for-
 ‘ bidden to touch the garments of the unclean, so
 ‘ you must have no fellowship with the workers of
 ‘ iniquity, nor encourage any thing in your socie-
 ‘ ties that is likely to corrupt your principles and
 ‘ manners.’

Happy would it have been for Christians, if
 these plain directions of Jude had been well ob-
 served; many useless controversies would have
 been unknown; and the rigorous exercise of
 power, civil and ecclesiastical, in religious matters,
 would not have disturbed and wasted the church of
 Christ.

Christ. But what has been said is sufficient to shew the nature of true Christian zeal, and how it operates.

V. Let us now attend to the last general head of discourse that was proposed, viz. The grounds and reasons of the exhortation which has been explained.

Zeal for Christian liberty is very inconsistent and absurd if it be attended with indifferency to the Christian faith, for Christ makes his people free by the knowledge of the truth; and zeal both for the doctrinal and practical articles of his religion may be justified by the most convincing arguments. I shall remind you of some of them—God grant that while we are musing on these things the holy fire may kindle in our hearts!

1. Consider, I beseech you, *first*, The infinite dignity and glory of the Author and object of our faith, the Lord Jesus Christ, and what he taught and what he did for us and for *our* salvation. Can the Truth, which the Son of God himself, the Word which in the beginning was with God, and was God, thought it worth the while to leave the mansions of glory to bring down from heaven, and, stooping to be made flesh, tabernacled among men, without a place where to lay his head, more than thirty years, to teach it with his own divine lips—Can that be a light thing? just what we might, or nothing more than we might have known by natural reason, which is the common, original, and universal gift of Nature in its ordinary course? Or
does

does truth revealed at such an expence to the God's head, and in a manner so astonishingly distinguished, merit but little regard? Can we suppose that God would have sent his only begotten Son into the world only to republish the religion of Nature, and to give mankind in his own life an example of perfect obedience, when, from the corruption of their fallen and degenerate nature, they could never perfectly imitate it? No. No. Jesus Christ certainly had something *new* to discover, and that of the greatest importance. He came to make known, and to do it indeed more clearly than ever had been done by any former dispensation, the way of *forgiveness* and *salvation*: and these are things which the religion of Nature, that is the religion of innocent creatures, in their primitive state of integrity, had nothing to do with.

But neither is this all. The Messiah, as predicted of him from the beginning, came not only to *declare* but also to *do* the will of God, in the work of man's redemption. It was not possible (as the Apostle to the Hebrews reasons) that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin; wherefore (adds the Apostle) when *He* cometh into the world, he who was to save his people from their sins, he saith (in the prophetic words of David, who was an illustrious type of him, as they are taken from the 40th Psalm) Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared for me: Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to *do thy will*, O God *. Once in the end of

* Heb. x. 4, 5, 7.

the world Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, as the same Apostle expressly asserts* : and this is the doctrine of the Gospel as preached by Christ and his Apostles, to which we do well to take heed, as to a light shining in a truly dark place (a world black with the curse of a broken law), that in him we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

Christ by his death purchased and *secured* for his followers remission, reconciliation, and eternal life ; and at the same time he gave them *an assured hope* of those inestimable benefits ; a hope so well grounded and so sure as to pacify the fearful and doubting conscience, disquieted by guilt : for true it is, and a precious truth too, that the blood of God, as by a very high but a very just figure it is stiled, was at once the *price* and also a *pledge* of salvation with eternal glory, to all that believe in him who died and rose again from the dead, that he might be Lord both of the living and of the dead, acknowledged and obeyed in heaven and on earth.

How blind must they be who see not the glory of God in the Gospel of Christ, such a glory of mercy and righteousness met together as could never otherwise have been discovered ?—who do not see that glory shining with a transcendent lustre in the face of Jesus, who is the image of the invisible God, the brightness of the Father's glory ! If they who despised the *law* of Moses (that more obscure and imperfect manifestation of the divine mercy, and at best but a dark typical adumbration of the

* Heb. ix. 26.

œconomy of the covenant of grace)—if they died without mercy, of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy who have neglected the *grace* and *truth* that came by Jesus Christ, and disobeyed the voice of the great Immanuel, GOD-MAN? If they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth in the same manner as other prophets did, much more shall not they escape who turn away from him that speaketh from heaven as never man did, and who came from heaven on purpose to speak peace to men on earth by his own most precious blood. Moses, verily, was faithful in all God's house as a servant, but Christ as a Son over his own house, which he built; and therefore he is counted worthy of more honour than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house; for every house is built by some man, but he that built all things is God *. The angels desire to look into those things which are reported to us in the Gospel, these glorious spirits always behold the face of our Father in heaven, but they love to see him in the person and work of his dear Son, in whom all his perfections are displayed in their brightest splendor and most ravishing harmony. And shall men make light of those objects which are the wonder and joy of the heavenly hosts?

2. Consider the rich grace and free love of Christ to us unworthy miserable sinners, and what obligations of gratitude and duty are laid upon us.

* Heb. iii. 3, 4, 5.

Did he, who was Lord of all, humble himself, and take upon him the form of a servant, to exalt us? Did he become poor for our sakes, that we through his poverty might be rich? Did he suffer the death of the cross for us, that we might have life eternal through him; that we might be reconciled to God, pardoned and justified by his blood, sanctified by his spirit, and saved with an everlasting salvation; and shall not this love constrain us not only to live to him, but to fight and even to die for him? Shall we not deny ourselves, and be willing to do and bear all things for his sake? Shall not his cause be dearer to us than our own little interests, and all the gains and transitory possessions of this life? What shame and confusion will cover the faces of selfish and carnal professors of Christianity at the great day, when the Judge shall say to them, Ye called me Master and Saviour, but cared more for your own things than mine, and preferred your worldly profits to my glory and the concerns of my kingdom! God of his infinite mercy grant that this may not be laid to the charge of any one of us at the second coming of our Lord!

3. Again, consider the miserable state of the people that have not the Gospel preached to them.—How little do they know of God, of themselves, of their duty, and of the world to come? Their souls are perishing for want of knowledge; and shall we not do what we can to help them, by providing for them good ministers and instructors of youth,

youth, that they may be translated from darkness to light, and from the bondage of sin and Satan to the glorious liberty of the children of God? Is not this the highest and most excellent act of charity?

4. Consider further the promises of God relating to the extent and prosperity of the Christian church in the latter days, as an encouragement to your endeavours to promote the knowledge of Christ. God hath said, he will give to his Son the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession *; that the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea †; that all nations shall call him blessed ‡; and this Gospel of the kingdom (says Christ) shall be preached in all the world §. These prophecies have been in part fulfilled already; and who that loves Christ will not rejoice to be an instrument in the farther completion of them?

5. Especially, consider how many enemies Christ has in our world, and what pains they take to misrepresent and destroy his religion. The devil is an unwearied adversary to the truth as it is in Jesus. Infidels oppose it with all their art and eloquence; and some sap the foundations of the doctrine of Christ under the colour of great zeal for natural religion and morality. The Popish party compass sea and land to make profelytes to their absurd doctrines and abominable idolatries;

* Psalm ii. 8.

† Isaiah xi. 9.

‡ Psalm lxxii. 17.

§ Matth. xxiv. 14.

and all bad men are in their hearts haters of the Gospel, because it reveals the wrath of God from heaven against all their ungodliness and unrighteousness. Should not the friends of Christ, in such an alarming state of things, awake? Sure it is high time. Put on therefore the whole armour of God, and be valiant for the truth. Be of courage, my dear brethren; as good soldiers of Jesus Christ! Will ye also go away? Ye who profess to have tasted of the heavenly gift, the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come! Will ye follow them who have departed from the purity, and forsaken the practice of the faith once delivered to the saints; and like them also have no zeal for the propagation of the knowledge of the way to life eternal? Who is there that cares for none of these things? Not one, I hope, I trust, of that stamp is in this assembly. Let us rather say, Whither shall we go but unto thee, O Lord, thou hast the words of eternal life, and thou hast declared them, and it is thy will that they should be published and spread! With thee will we go; with thee, and in thy strength, we will labour and strive that all the world may obtain the like precious faith with us. What shall we have a concern for, if not for souls, kindred-souls, souls for which Christ gave his life a ransom? Indeed, my friends, those who show not that they have a value for the souls of others, give a poor proof of being sensible of the worth of their own.

6. And

6. And if the enemies of Christ be many, we have sufficient encouragement to encounter them, for the Lord of Hosts is with us; we fight under the banner of the Captain of our salvation, who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who never was and never shall be vanquished; who overcame and triumphed over principalities and powers, even in the lowest scene of his humiliation upon the cross; and is now exalted to the right hand of God, and has a name given him above every name, and shall reign till all enemies be subdued under his feet. O Sirs, do you not long, do you not press with ardour, to fight under such a leader, such a conqueror! Forget not (I beseech you) that promise he has left, "To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my father upon his throne."

Having such a Commander of the armies of Israel, and such a crown set before us, let us contend earnestly for the faith; and not be afraid of the opposers of the kingdom of God and his Christ: they trust in an arm of flesh, we trust in our living God and Redeemer.

Finally, consider the intrinsic excellence and singular advantage of Christian zeal. A blind persecuting spirit, under what form soever it appears, is very pernicious, but an ardent love to Christ and his Gospel, is the distinguishing mark of a child of God, and the image of his dearest son, who spent his whole life in glorifying his father, and doing good

good to men.—Christ sees somewhat of himself in the truly zealous Christian, and he will not fail to honour and reward him.—‘ This (will he say) is my disciple indeed ! this is my brother and my friend ! he thinks and acts in some measure as I did when I lived in the flesh.—The zeal of my Father’s house did eat me up, and there is a portion of the same zeal in this man ; I went about communicating benefits to the souls and bodies of mankind, and *his* heart is set upon works of mercy !’ Who so noble as the person that is thus approved and commended by the Lord ? He is one of the burning and shining lights of the world, and the less he knows of his own good qualifications, the fairer are they in the eyes of him from whom they came, and who dwelleth with the humble and the contrite.

Men may despise and ridicule such a person, but God loves him, God praises him, and will pour out blessings upon him without number and without end. His labours of love are recorded in heaven, and providence will reward him with temporal and spiritual mercies in this life : as he sows plentifully, he shall reap plentifully. But the great recompence is reserved to the day of judgment, when the Son of man shall come from heaven with a cloud of angels, and shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations. The king and judge will then rehearse the good purposes and deeds of his servants with approbation,

approbation, and say unto them, Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for all the good ye have done to my brethren and disciples ye have done unto myself; all was done to the one family of which I am the head and they the members.

The considerations that have been offered to you are the greatest motives that can be to Christian charity, and I hope, through the blessing of God, will make us very zealous of good works; and if the Lord will shine into our hearts this day with his all-powerful love, I am fully persuaded I shall not be without success in the application I am now going to make to all the Disciples of Jesus, who have his cause at heart, for their assistance to one of the best works I know, the charity of the Society in Scotland, (incorporated by Royal Charter) for propagating Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands, and for the civilization and conversion of the American Indians.

I shall give you some extracts from the last account of this Society, printed in the year 1771, which (I believe) will soon be followed with a new publication, containing a history of great good done by means of this institution in the Highlands, where attempts have been made, and are now carrying on with great zeal, to revive the Popish interest by the emissaries of the *Propaganda* College at Rome, from which a continual succession of trafficking Priests are sent, natives of the Highlands,
and

and posselt of the Erse language, which gives them great advantages.

It appears from the narrative which I have before me, that the beginning of this honourable Society was very small, but (blessed be God) it has since that time been greatly increased,

The foundation was laid about the year 1700, by the voluntary subscriptions of a few private gentlemen who used to meet in order to encourage the great business of reformation of manners. If the beginning was not great, it was good, and these pious persons had the pleasure to see providence smiling upon it; and I trust those of them that are departed this life now enjoy a full reward.—In the year 1706, they offered their pious and benevolent scheme to the Public.—In the year 1708, they applied to the throne, and Queen Anne did, by her royal proclamation, approve and recommend the design of the Society to all her loving subjects.

The next year it was laid before the General Assembly of the church of Scotland, and all the ministers and members of that national church were earnestly exhorted to support it to the utmost of their power.—In the year following, her Majesty Queen Anne granted her letters patent for the royal incorporation of this society, and enabling them to give commissions to gentlemen in London and elsewhere, to act as corresponding members: In consequence of which, eighty-two persons, nine peers and seventy-three commoners,
among

among whom were the Judges, Officers of state, and many others of the first quality and distinction, met at Edinburgh, and elected proper officers for the management of the affairs of the Society.

In the year 1738, the Society applied to the late King, George the Second, of glorious memory, for an additional patent, by virtue of which they were empowered to train up such children as were fit and disposed, for husbandry, manufactures, and trades: in prosecuting the objects of which second patent, the Society has been greatly encouraged and supported by several very considerable benefactions appropriated to that purpose, particularly a legacy of 2000 l. left by Seymour Wood, Esq; of London, and another by Mr. John Raining of Norwich.

The Society have also extended their views to America, encouraged by two liberal donations, one by the reverend Dr. Williams of London, the other by an English lady.

A commission was granted to three missionaries, to preach the Gospel to the Indian Tribes bordering on New England, in which they continued several years; another missionary was sent to Georgia, where he laboured till the year 1742.

The most successful mission was undertaken in the year 1741, to the Indians bordering on New York and Pennsylvania; the happy effects whereof are related in Mr. David Brainard's Journal, published at Philadelphia 1742, and republished, with President Edwards's account of his life, at Edinburgh, in 1765. Mr. David Brainard is dead, but

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succeeded

succeeded by his brother Mr. John Brainard; and, according to his last Journal, the mission is executed with zeal and success.

The Society has three boards of correspondents in America, one at Boston, one at Connecticut, and one at New Jersey, consisting of Gentlemen of the most worthy characters in those parts.

I can assure you, great care is taken by this Society in the choice and strict superintendence of their schoolmasters and schools, and the religious instruction of the children. The number of schools maintained by the Society from November 1768, to November 1769, was no less than **ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THREE**, in which were educated near **EIGHT THOUSAND** children of both sexes *, in places where, from distance and other natural disadvantages, the parochial schools can be of no service, and the advantages of the established ministry very little felt. For the benefit of those parts in which the English language is not understood, the Society has been at the expence of six hundred and forty pounds in translating and printing ten thousand copies of a version of the New Testament in the Gallic or Erse language.

The Society is (we own with pleasure and gratitude) possessed of a considerable stock in money and land; but it is only the annual produce thereof which they are at liberty to employ for the

* There are now 157 schools, and the number of children considerably above 8000,

benefit of the Institution; and this annual produce is far from being sufficient to answer the many earnest applications for new schools, which are every year received from various quarters.

For this reason the Society in Scotland, and the worthy ministers and gentlemen, the corresponding members in London, (with whom I have had the honour of being connected almost forty years) beg the assistance of the Public, and hope that Protestants of all denominations will favour their great undertaking, according to their abilities.

I heartily implore God's blessing on this my weak essay, to promote the excellent end of the Society, which is to spread the Christian Religion, and enlarge the happiness of human society, and extend the advantages of that most desirable government under which we enjoy so many and great blessings.

Who, that loves Christ and immortal souls, does not feel his heart interested in the pious design that has been recommended? Who does not perceive the salutary consequences of it? Who, but the common enemy of mankind, can oppose such a good work as this? What zealous Christian can be lukewarm with respect to it?

Let us consider it as a common cause, that claims the regard of all Christians, Britons, and Protestants. Let us not draw back from this service on account of the many charities that may be solicited from us, nor let us be weary of well-doing, for in due time we shall reap, if we faint not.

How different will be the account of the charitable Christian, and the penurious miser, and the luxurious profligate, at the day of judgment! So much laid up without good improvement, so much laid out in idle pleasures and amusements, so much worse than spent in the gratification of evil lusts and passions, and nothing done or bestowed with sincere love, for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.—O! how will such an accusation of the omniscient Lord, overwhelm many at the last day! But I hope better things of you, my brethren, and things that accompany salvation, though I thus speak.

I doubt not, many of you have a real and lively concern for the progress of the Gospel, and the welfare of your fellow-creatures, both in this life and that which is to come. You know there is a pleasure in doing good far superior to sensual entertainments; you know there is an excellency in acts of pious and Christian charity, that rises above all other duties; for they are imitations of the goodness of God and our Saviour. With such sacrifices God is well pleased, and if he be well pleased, he will manifest his loving kindness in a rich variety of benefits; He will supply all the needs of his servants who are liberal to his poor people, and who love to communicate to them; his blessing shall be on their families, and the good will of him that dwelt in the bush shall be with them; He will bless their worldly

worldly substance, bless them in the city and in the field, and whatsoever they do according to his will shall prosper; He will be with them in trouble, make up their beds in their sickness; bread shall be given them, and their water shall be sure; all things shall work together for good unto them, and their latter end shall be peace: they have reason to hope for a divine benediction on their posterity; their memory shall be honourable and precious; and when the hard-hearted and covetous who considered not the afflictions of Joseph, nor sought the welfare of Israel, and who, whatever they consumed on their lusts, would spare nothing for the advantage of the Christian community, shall go away into everlasting punishment, they shall enter into everlasting life and joy.

Now, in the words of our Apostle's conclusion of this short epistle, Unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us, faultless, before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

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Amen.

Form of a Bequest or Legacy.

Item, **I** GIVE and bequeath the sum of _____ to the Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge, to be applied (*either to the purposes of the first or second Patent, as the Donor pleases.*)

N. B. The first patent respects the instruction of the children in the Society's schools, where they are educated in the principles of the Protestant Religion and Loyalty, and taught reading, writing, arithmetic, &c. The second Patent authorizes their being bred up to useful labour and industry, in agriculture, manufactures, and handicrafts.

Benefactions for the use of the Society will be received in London, as under :

By James Coutts, Esq; Banker in the Strand,
Treasurer to the Correspondent Board;
John Mackintosh, Esq; Lothbury, Secretary;
John Drummond, Esq; and Co. Bankers,
Charing-cross;
William Fuller, Esq; and Son, Bankers,
Lombard-street.

Printed States of the Society may be had, *gratis*, of the Secretary; and every Benefactor or Contributor may become a Member.

Form of a Bequest or Legacy.

I GIVE and bequeath the sum of _____ to the Society in

Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge to be applied (either to the support of the Bible or Sunday School, or the Poor School) _____

M. B. The first part respects the instruction of the children in the Society's schools, where they are educated in the principles of the Protestant Religion and Piety, and taught reading, writing, arithmetic, &c. The second part respects their being put up to useful labour and industry, in agriculture, handicrafts, and manufactures.

Benefactions for the use of the Society will be received in London, as under:

By James Court, Esq; Banker in the Strand;
Treasurer to the Correspondent Board;
John Macdonald, Esq; Leith, Secretary;
John Drummond, Esq; and Co. Bankers,
Glasgow, Correspondents;
William Knibb, Esq; and Co. Bankers,
London Street.

Printed Secret of the Society may be had, gratis, of the Secretary; and every Benefactor or Contributor may become a Member.

